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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2906

INFO RUEHDL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ATHENS 001658

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PREL PHUM ASEC GR

SUBJECT: GREEK RIOTS: DECEMBER 11 UPDATE

REF: A. ATHENS 1656

1B. ATHENS 1649

1C. ATHENS 1643

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: Greece was relatively quiet at late afternoon Thursday. PM Karamanlis traveled to Brussels to participate in European Council meetings December 11-12. The atmosphere in the country remained tense, however, and it was impossible to predict whether the slackening off of demonstrations represented the beginning of the end of the violence or only a break before renewed confrontations. Students and teachers were planning more demonstrations Thursday evening and throughout the day Friday. The Embassy remains in contact with several small groups of Amcits whose travel has been affected by the security situation. At this stage, we have not received reports of any Amcit injuries or loss of property. END SUMMARY.

EVENING OF DECEMBER 10 QUIETER

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12. (SBU) Incidents slacked off late Wednesday following afternoon police clashes with demonstrators on the central Syntagma Square in front of Parliament in Athens and similar demonstrations marred by violence in Thessaloniki and elsewhere. In the evening, sporadic confrontations with police appeared confined to the areas around the Athens Polytechnic and the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki. At 21:00, the rector of Aristotle University along with a group of 200 teachers and students interceded with anarchists, who eventually departed the campus.

DECEMBER 11: A BREATHER BEFORE MORE?

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13. (SBU) Greece was fairly quiet at late afternoon Thursday, with reports of small-scale protests at individual police stations in Athens and students blocking a number of major thoroughfares in the Athens metropolitan area. PM Karamanlis traveled to Brussels to participate in European Council meetings December 11-12. The atmosphere in Greece remained tense, however, and it was impossible to predict whether the slackening off of large-scale demonstrations represented the beginning of the end of the violence or only a break before renewed protests. Public school students remained out of school for teachers' meetings, and while the Minister of Education rejected calls to declare an early Christmas vacation, it appears that many schools may be closed through the holidays. The death of Grigoropoulos has sparked unrest at the secondary school level, and there is concern that unrest may also take place at or near individual high schools and campuses as student committees meet to plan their next moves.

14. (SBU) Newspapers are publishing lists of announced demonstrations, which include:

Thursday, December 11:  
17:00, Thessaloniki, The Arch of Galerios, anarchists  
18:00, Athens University, students and teachers

Friday, December 12:  
12:00, Athens University, students and teachers  
12:00, Omonoia Square Athens, students and teachers  
15:30, Syntagma Square Athens, students and teachers  
18:00, Aristotle Square, Thessaloniki, students and labor unions

Saturday, December 13:  
12:00, Thessaloniki Polytechnic, students and labor unions

Monday, December 15:  
12:00, sit-in at Police Headquarters in Athens on Alexandras Ave (near to the U.S. Embassy), students and teachers

COURT ACTIONS FOR POLICEMEN

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¶5. (SBU) On December 10, the two police officers charged in the Grigoropoulos shooting appeared before a magistrate to submit depositions, while demonstrators, including secondary school students and their parents, protested. Firebombs were also thrown at the court building. Final ballistics and other forensic reports have not yet been issued.

MISSION GREECE ACTIONS

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¶6. (SBU) Our warden message remains in effect (ref B). The

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SPECKHARD